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To: General Wheeler, CJCS, Washington, D. C.
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Subject: Assessment of NVA/VC Intentions in Cambodia

1. During the past week an assessment has been prepared on NVA/VC intentions in Cambodia as reflected in documents captured during the cross-border operations. This assessment has been presented to Ambassadors Bunker and Berger and is forwarded for your information.
2. "NVA/VC intentions in Cambodia as reflected in captured documents. Following is an analysis of the content of several documents which have been uncovered in the course of the Cambodian cross-border operations. The documents are all dated prior to the commencement of the U. S. incursions into Cambodia except for one which is undated. They express very clearly the intentions of the NVA/VC with regard to Cambodia. In summary, these intentions are: (1) to help Sihanouk establish his Royal Government of National Union in Cambodia by establishing local communist administration, (2) to work for the formation throughout Cambodia of a pro-communist front organization, and (3) to bolster the local Cambodian Guerrilla Forces (Khmer Rouge).

"Perhaps the best indication of exactly what the enemy intends comes from captured documents, for they contain the NVA/VC's intentions in their own words. In the course of the cross-border operations, approximately 5.5 tons of enemy documents have been obtained so far. Many of the documents have already provided important information.

"The documents which are the subject of this analysis are the ones dealing with NVA/VC intentions in Cambodia as expressed prior to the cross-border operations. No documents on this subject have been found of the calibre of COSVN Resolution No. 9. Rather, the evidence is a compilation of many minor documents such as directives, memoranda, notebooks, circulars, lesson plans, and letters. Combined, they appear to present an extremely accurate picture.

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DIA review
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Army review completed

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- 2 -

"Generally, it can be said that after the change of the regimes in Phnom Penh, the enemy became very concerned about carrying out, in accordance with his timetable, his objectives in South Vietnam. In order to ensure the favorable internal strategic position of his sanctuaries, the enemy recognized that it would be necessary to either replace the Lon Nol Regime with the more sympathetic Sihanouk in order to obtain the status quo ante or at least to secure Cambodia east of the Mekong and to harass the Lon Nol government to such an extent that it would not be able to put any pressure on the sanctuaries. This strategy, of course, discounts the possibility of any ARVN/US incursions. In order to carry out this strategy, it was necessary for the NVA/VC to intensify their military and political activities in Cambodia.

"For the purpose of this analysis, the captured documents have been categorized according to the following subject matters: (1) those that deal with the establishment of Cambodian front groups and local communist government administrations and with the bolstering of the role of the Khmer Rouge, (2) those that deal with the role of the NVA/VC military in the work, and (3) those that deal with fostering the spirit of unity between the Vietnamese and Cambodians.

"First, those documents dealing with the methods the communists plan to use to form pro-Sihanouk front committees and local governmental administrations and to bolster the local insurgent forces will be examined.

"A six-page guide, which was undated and which is believed to have been drafted by an agency subordinate to the political staff department of Headquarters, SVNLA, was found in Kratie Province near Snoul by elements of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. The guide provides a plan for the Organization of the National United Front of Cambodia at hamlet and village level. The guide begins by explaining the characteristics and mission of the Front committees: 'The Front committee will function as a new administration to replace the present government. It will serve as the leading organ of the working class and to those patriotic people who wish to support Prince Sihanouk in his struggle against the Lon Nol clique and the U.S.; and to develop a tight friendship and solidarity with the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam and the South Vietnam Liberation Army.' Among the specific missions listed in the guide for the Front committees are the tasks of overthrowing the Lon Nol Regime, improving Khmer-Vietnamese solidarity against the Americans, organizing the people in liberation associations such as youth's, women's, and old people's groups, building up the local armed forces of the Cambodian Liberation Army, and organizing other village and hamlet Front committees.

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EYES ONLY

- 3 -

Section two of three:

"The guide then outlines with great specificity the structure of the village and hamlet committees. The village committees are to be composed of from five to seven members. The committee chairman is to be in charge of general administration and political organization, and the vice chairman is to be in charge of military and security affairs. The secretary is to handle all informational problems, and other members are to manage cultural affairs, education, Front organization activities, and civil health matters. At hamlet level, the Front committees are to have from three to five members, according to the guide.

"During the period before permanent regulations are promulgated, the Front committee members are to be elected every six months. Concerning the qualification necessary for those who wish to run for a committee position, the guide says that the following criteria are necessary: (1) the individual must have won the complete confidence of the village or hamlet concerned, (2) he must have displayed a clear-cut attitude against Lon Nol and in favor of Sihanouk, and (3) he must have displayed a favorable attitude toward the Vietnamese people and the South Vietnam Liberation Army, in the resistance against the Americans. In addition, lower-echelon committee members who are elected must be approved by the immediately higher echelon committee.

"Another document pertaining to the formation of the Front was found by the 1st Cavalry Division in the FISHHOOK base area of the Headquarters of the SVNLA. The document, which is dated 1 May, is entitled 'Summary of the Situation of 12 Villages in the Base Area.' The document is a report which concerns political activities of an unidentified agency from 11 to 30 April. The report states that Phase One, which lasted from 11 to 12 April, consisted of political reorienting cadre and troops. Phase Two from 12 to 30 April concerned activating Cambodian Guerrilla Forces and establishing an infrastructure. At the end of the period, the goal was to have local Khmer Rouge administrations in five of the 12 villages which were the subject of the report.

"A directive of the Military Affairs Party Committee of Headquarters SVNLA, dated 27 March 1970, outlines a number of ways with which to contact Cambodian officers. This document was found southeast of Snoul in Krapie Province. It explains the technique for approaching Cambodian officers to convince them to change their allegiance to Sihanouk. At the conclusion the document reads, 'We should point out to them that their

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- 4 -

duty is to save their country. It should also be pointed out to these officers that we are ready to provide them with every assistance, including cadre and armed forces.'

"An element of the U.S. 9th Infantry Division captured an NVA soldier's notebook in Tay Ninh Province near the Cambodian border. In an entry dated 18 April, the soldier said that he was assigned to activate guerrilla elements and to form the Cambodian National United Front in certain named hamlets and villages in Kompong Chom Province, Cambodia. He was also responsible for training guerrilla forces in his area.

"A review of the enemy's political activity was found in a report uncovered in Kompong Chom Province, dated 19 April. The report summarizes a meeting held by representatives of the base area security committee of COSVN.

"The fact that the communists intended to increase controlled area, to control the Vietnamese populace of Cambodia, and to use the Mekong as a possible LOC is expressed in the following section of the report: 'At present we are striving to expand our areas of activities and exercise control in them. We now control an area stretching from Road 7 to the vicinity of the Mekong River, and from Mimot to an area adjacent to the Mekong River. This is an important base area. We had to establish a base area of 60 kilometers in every direction in order to hold the 60 to 70,000 people who have completely sided with Sihanouk. In addition, some thousands of Vietnamese residents are now living along the bank of the Mekong River. This Mekong area may fit the transportation, postal communication, and signal communication strategy.'

"The second category of documents are those which deal with the role of the NVA/VC military in carrying out the establishment of the Front. A very detailed notebook of the Signal Office of the Military Staff Department of Headquarters SVNLA was found in the Mimot area. The entry for 18 April states that NVA/VC cadre will head local forces companies composed of Cambodian combatants. In addition, signal battalions were to be organized by Headquarters SVNLA for the use of the revolutionary movement. The signal battalions are to be used in all provinces, and military regions. The notebook also contains a study of an unspecified directive which relates that the immediate mission of the NVA/VC in 1970 is to support the local revolutionary movement, to consolidate base areas, and to complete combat preparations for attacks on Cambodian troops.

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- 5 -

Final Section of three:

"Two documents, both of them notebooks, concern the activities of the 141st Regiment, 7th NVA Division. One notebook captured in Kratie Province states that the purpose of Campaign X in Cambodia is to destroy the forces of Lon Nol. Areas which are occupied are to be held until they are transferred to the Khmer Rouge. In addition, the document says that all attacks should be conducted in close coordination with the establishment of the infrastructure. The second notebook, which was captured in Kompong, Cham Province, also talks about Campaign X. It states that the NVA troops are helping the Khmer people develop a socialist country, but while doing so, they are creating a situation advantageous for the liberation of South Vietnam.

"The final type of document to be examined today are those which give guidelines to members of the NVA/VC for fostering Khmer-Vietnamese solidarity. Headquarters SVNLA has adopted a ten-point code of conduct to govern the conduct of North Vietnamese soldiers toward the local Khmer populace. The code, which has been found in several captured documents, is quite specific. For instance, it mentions proper conduct with regard to monks, religious institutions, and Khmer women. It also covers the necessity to pay for any damage and to compensate for all food.

"In the Mimot area, a Headquarters SVNLA regulation was found entitled 'Battlefield Discipline for Troops Operating in Cambodia.' One interesting section says, 'Do not reveal the presence of the SVNLA in Cambodia. Do not carry documents. Do not speak Vietnamese while in the presence of PW.'

"In summary, these documents are clearly indicative of the intentions of the NVA/VC to foster a communist, pro-Sihanouk revolutionary movement in Cambodia. The optimum goal would be to install a pro-communist government in Cambodia to restore the status quo ante with regard to sanctuaries and supply routes. This appears to be a long-range effort consistent with the strategy of protracted conflict, for the NVA are presently working at the lowest levels with much attention to detail to build a popular base for Sihanouk much as they have attempted to do for the Provisional Revolutionary Government in South Vietnam.

"From the documents, it would appear that country-wide military action will not occur in Cambodia until the Khmer Rouge have been strengthened to the point where they would be able to effectively serve

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- 6 -

as infrastructure cadre throughout Cambodia. Also, large-scale action by the NVA prior to the solid establishment of the revolutionary movement in Cambodia would prevent such military activity from having the aura of a 'popular uprising,' which is usually a critical element in NVA actions.

"Until this long-range goal can be accomplished, the NVA will probably attempt to solidify their position east of the Mekong and to secure a new line of communications from Laos on the Sekong-Mekong Rivers. It is also likely that the Khmer Rouge will intensify their activities in those key areas where they are now located, especially in the rice-rich Western Province of Battambang."

3. We will continue to monitor and keep you informed.

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SIGNIFICANCE OF ENEMY DOCUMENTS CAPTURED IN CAMBODIA

1. Preliminary Analysisa. General

-- Headquarters, MACV, has reported that the Combined Documents Exploitation Center (CDEC) in Saigon has received and processed well over 2.8 million pages (about 5.5 tons) of enemy documents captured as a result of Allied operations in Cambodia. Several thousand more pages are in the pipeline from the field to CDEC, and more are being uncovered every day.

-- The documents captured vary from complex operations orders and financial plans to such ordinary items as personal letters. The more prevalent categories include operations orders; cryptographic and signal materials; terrorist plans; medical, logistic, personnel, and infiltration records; and political, personnel, and educational materials.

-- Approximately 5,500 synopses of captured documents have been received by this Agency. The vast majority were discovered in or near Base Areas 352 and 353 in the Fishhook area, the long-time location of COSVN headquarters elements. Most of the other documents were captured in or near Base Areas 706 and 367 in the Parrot's Peak region. The presence of such large quantities at these capture sites attests to the use of these Cambodian regions by the VC/NVA to support their war effort in the Republic of Vietnam.

b. Significance

-- Documents screened thus far indicate that they will make an important contribution to our understanding of Hanoi's military-political organization in the South. On the one hand, they provide significant new information; on the other, they provide comprehensive details or corroborate our judgments concerning the wide scope of VC/NVA activities in Southeast Asia.

-- At least 20 per cent of the documents recovered thus far are highly significant. Additional valuable documents will undoubtedly be found as in-depth analysis is performed.

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c. Special-Interest Documents

-- Examples of some of the subjects covered by the documents are:

(1) North Vietnamese infiltration into the Republic of Vietnam;

(2) The Communist military-political organization and its policies in the Republic of Vietnam and Cambodia;

(3) Strengths and composition of enemy units; and

(4) The Communist logistics structure.

-- Examples of their significance follow in succeeding paragraphs.

d. Infiltration

-- Documents recovered in the Fishhook and Parrot's Beak again make it crystal clear that the war in the Republic of Vietnam constitutes nothing less than a North Vietnamese invasion -- despite Hanoi's protestations that it is a legitimate popular uprising.

-- A diary captured in early May that was kept by a key North Vietnamese military officer named Mai Van Tung, for example, confirmed that the infiltration of NVA troops into the Republic would intensify during the period December 1969-July 1970 and that it would peak from February to April. Documents also point up the prime role of North Vietnam in the war in the South. Special straggler recovery and replacement regiments (subordinate to a COSVN headquarters echelon and located in the Fishhook-Parrot's Beak area in Cambodia) had the mission of making sure that any troops delayed on the trek south were swiftly moved to the fighting front; these units were also responsible for evacuating the sick and wounded. Mai Van Tung recorded that during the first three months of 1970 an infiltration-exfiltration processing unit would receive up to 15 southbound infiltration groups and 1,000 convalescents being evacuated to the north. On 5 March 1970, he noted that more than 1,200 sick and wounded would be heading north from one area alone.

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e. Communist Political-Military Organization/Policies

-- Documents have provided valuable insights into the history, composition, function, organization, personalities, and effectiveness of the widely dispersed COSVN organization, the so-called Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (PRG), and the VC/NVA military force structure.

-- We now know, for example, that COSVN elements had undertaken a phased turnover of certain functions to the PRG as part of a plan to turn the latter into a viable organization; for its part, the PRG is to hold a series of well-publicized cabinet meetings and conferences with sympathetic outsiders in an effort to generate support. Rosters of high-ranking cadre attached to the various elements of the Communist apparatus in the South as well as finance and economy records give us a better idea of the strength of key enemy military and political elements opposing the South Vietnamese. They also contain specific guidance concerning the imposition of "taxes" on the South Vietnamese and the "life-and-death" necessity of food production to support the fighting forces.

-- One of the most revealing documents outlines an insurgency campaign in Cambodia. It noted the necessity of establishing an organization to (1) destroy and replace the Lon Nol government, (2) maintain good friendship between the Vietnamese Communists and the Cambodians, and (3) to resist US forces. Specific guidance included the establishment of a "Red" Cambodia, the formation of "liberation organizations" among various elements of the population down to the hamlet and village level, and the expansion of the local Communist forces and "liberation areas" where an infrastructure could be fostered. The document makes it clear that the Communist infrastructure in Cambodia was not considered effective and that Hanoi will control all efforts to overthrow the new Cambodian government. The recent capture of this document comes in the wake of the Cambodian claims of the discovery of plans in the PRG Embassy in Phnom Penh calling for the elimination of "rightists" in the Lon Nol government and even Prince Sihanouk himself. Also, documents the Cambodians report that were seized from the North Vietnamese Embassy in Phnom Penh called for the eventual annexation of Cambodia to Communist Vietnam (the PRG and North Vietnamese documents are not in US intelligence possession).

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-- Concerning strictly military matters in Cambodia, some 35 documents screened so far emphasized the dominant position of COSVN, the necessity of positioning command-and-control and logistics support elements in Cambodia, and the crucial importance of these elements to fighting units in the Republic of Vietnam. The VC/NVA's heavy reliance on Cambodian sanctuaries to support the war, especially in the Fishhook and Parrot's Beak areas, is shown by the identification of special security and guard elements there and by the detailed planning that has taken place to ensure safety. Some of the documents contained orders and plans for the evacuation and dispersal of military and logistics elements and facilities after the ouster of Prince Sihanouk and for passive air defense measures to be employed by COSVN echelons. The adverse impact of Allied operations on enemy morale was also apparent.

f. Strengths and Composition of Enemy Units

-- Documents captured in Cambodia generally appear to be more comprehensive than any taken in the Republic of Vietnam since they contain data used for high-level planning. As such, they will enable us to refine our enemy strength estimates for both fighting and support units.

-- As previously noted, new enemy units have been identified (straggler and recovery regiments). Also, the strength and organization of enemy forces in areas such as the Western Highlands can be assessed and followed with more precision. Documentary identification of the manning and scope of support elements in Cambodia such as hospitals, transportation facilities, and farming units should in time permit the first full-scale assessment of the enemy's over-all effort in the sanctuary areas.

g. Enemy Logistics Structure

-- So far, the documents have been least informative about the enemy logistic structure in Cambodia and its day-to-day operations.

-- Those that have referred to this subject have, however, made it clear that an extensive logistics organization had been established and that it was supporting the war in 2d, 3d, and 4th Corps. Concern for the safety of supply caches, especially rice and ammunition, was also clear, especially in view of the growing enemy fear of Allied operations in Cambodia. An inventory of transportation assets of a COSVN-subordinated Rear Service Staff Department -- the

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document was captured in the Parrot's Beak -- provides a better understanding of the extensive organization of primitive means of transportation -- oxcarts, bicycles, sampans, etc., -- in the Mekong Delta. More such information may well permit the quantification of the enemy's effort in this regard and thus enable even more effective disruption of these logistics operations.

2. Conclusions

-- As a minimum, enemy documents captured in Cambodia provide further evidence of the Communists' reliance on that country to support their war effort in the Republic of Vietnam.

-- This reliance takes almost every form, e.g., the establishment of command-and-control elements; the supervision of military and subversive operations in both countries, including plans to overthrow the legitimate government; and the establishment of an extensive rear services organization which performs such functions as caring for the sick and wounded, organizing the flow of supplies to combat units, maintaining storage complexes and performing economic, postal, and communications services. Although not explicitly stated, the documents themselves make clear that the enemy's use of Cambodia, especially the Parrot's Beak and the Fishhook, has been essential to the continuation of the war in the Republic of Vietnam.

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